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AUTHOR Martin, Joanne M.; Martin, Elmer P.
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ABSTRACT

This book describes and documents the existence of the black helping tradition, and offers a theory regarding its origin, development, and decline. The book is based on research operating from the fundamental assumption that a pattern of black self-help activities developed from the black extended family, particularly the extended family's major elements of mutual aid, social-class cooperation, male-female equality, and prosocial behavior in children; and that the pattern of black self-help spread from the black extended family to institutions in the wider black community through fictive kinship and racial and religious consciousness. In the following six chapters the book expands on and substantiates these ideas: (1) "The Helping Tradition in Traditional Africa and in Slavery"; (2) "The Helping Tradition among Free Blacks"; (3) "The Helping Tradition during Reconstruction"; (4) "The Helping Tradition in Rural and Urban America"; (5) "The Black Helping Tradition and Social Work"; and (6) "Summary." Also included is a 97-item bibliography. Each chapter is accompanied by extensive references. (JB)

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